

Amazon's answer to tricky gadgets: Installation services

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Amazon.com is rolling out a new service that makes it easier for customers to buy gadgets and products that are hard to install, such as thermostats or dishwashers.

On Monday, the company debuted Amazon Home Services, a marketplace for professional services, everything from plumbing to tire installation to [music lessons](#). Home Services, which Reuters in June reported was being tested, is now available in 40 states. The most comprehensive offerings are in four cities where Amazon tested the [service](#), Seattle, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Buying such products as a big, flat-panel TV, is easy to do on Amazon. But the challenge of installing it on a wall can drive customers instead to local stores that offer those services.

So Amazon has taken the step of finding qualified service providers to take care of tasks too daunting or time consuming for some customers to handle on their own.

"It's a very big pain point," said Peter Faricy, Amazon Marketplace vice president.

If a [service provider](#) that Amazon has vetted offers installation in the customer's Zip code, for example, Amazon will programmatically offer it when a customer buys an item that might need it. And if multiple installers are available, Amazon will list the different offerings, just as it

lists multiple sellers for the same book on its site.

The company isn't disclosing the number of service providers it has signed up, but it said it's offering 700 different services with 2.4 million service offerings. None of the services requires purchasing items on Amazon. And there are several, including pressure washing or voice lessons, that aren't directly related to an Amazon product sale.

Faricy said that Amazon has interviewed every one of the service providers and has run background checks on all of them. The company is also guaranteeing every service purchase, promising to work with customers and providers to resolve disputes or provide refunds.

For service professionals, Amazon offers customer leads. Amazon collects funds from customers, keeps between 10 percent and 20 percent, and pays providers every two weeks, Faricy said.

About 95 percent of the providers are "local neighborhood businesses," Faricy said. The company has also signed up nationally known companies, such as Dish, which has a network of installers for its satellite-television service, and Pep Boys, which offers auto-repair professions for its auto-parts products.

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